

EXHIBIT

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**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR
THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF NORTH CAROLINA**

STUDENTS FOR FAIR ADMISSIONS,
INC,

Plaintiff,

v.

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH
CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL, et al.,

Defendants.

Civil Action No. 1:14-cv-954-LCB-JLW

DECLARATION OF LAURA ORNELAS

Laura Ornelas, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1746, declares the following:

1. My name is Laura Ornelas, I am over 18 years of age, and I am fully competent to make this declaration.
2. I am a full-time undergraduate student at UNC-Chapel Hill. I am a rising junior and am pursuing a major in Hispanic Linguistics and Latin American Studies.
3. I am Hispanic.
4. I chose to attend UNC-Chapel Hill because of its proximity to home and the low cost of attendance. Being close to home was very important to me.
5. I believe my background enables me to offer unique perspectives and cultural experiences in my academic and campus activities. I came to UNC-Chapel Hill from a high school that was predominately white, and I am one of only a handful of minority students from my school who went to a top-tier university. This environment

was very different than the upbringing my parents had, so I have a varied perspective on what it means to experience life as a Latina. It is easier for me to understand different perspectives because the people closest to me have experienced a lot. I think many other UNC-Chapel Hill students have a more limited experience with different cultural perspectives.

6. I believe the benefits of racial or ethnic diversity play an important role in a number of academic and campus activities that affect my undergraduate experience, including lectures, seminars, residential life, student government, communities of faith, extracurricular activities, and community service programs. In particular, I have been involved with the Scholars' Latino Initiative (SLI), as a mentor and a member of the Executive Board. SLI is an organization within UNC-Chapel Hill's Center for Global Initiatives that creates three-year mentoring partnerships between UNC-Chapel Hill students and high achieving Latino/a students to prepare the high school students for enrollment in a college or university. These activities benefit enormously from racial and ethnic diversity and by the membership of people from different backgrounds.

7. I currently experience academic and personal benefits from UNC-Chapel Hill's racially diverse student body. I've met people at UNC-Chapel Hill from a variety of backgrounds who have had life experiences similar to my own. Attending school in a predominantly white school system made me feel I was the "exception to the rule" for a very long time. Meeting other minority students at UNC-Chapel Hill made me realize that there are plenty of minority students accomplishing the same things I am.

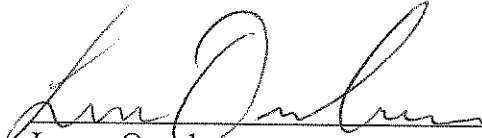
8. I believe my education would be harmed if UNC-Chapel Hill stopped considering race in its admission decisions. The current policy facilitates the admission of strong Hispanic students, which improves my educational experience by allowing me to learn alongside a greater number of Hispanic students so that I do not feel singled out, or made to feel that I have to be a spokesperson for my race/ethnicity. The policy facilitates the admission of underrepresented minority students with racial or ethnic backgrounds different from my own and from whom I feel I learn both inside and outside the classroom. I want to work in an international setting, so it is important for me to be around people who have different backgrounds and world views.

9. I want to learn and live alongside students who are each a part of a critical mass of their race/ethnicity. To facilitate that, I would like to see an increase in the number and diversity of underrepresented racial groups admitted to UNC-Chapel Hill. Though I have many more Latino peers at UNC-Chapel Hill than I did in high school, I still feel that we are underrepresented. I would love to see more minority students on campus because we have a variety of perspectives that are not always heard on campus.

10. Racial issues among UNC-Chapel Hill students can be difficult. I noticed racial tension most during the debate over whether or not to rename Saunders Hall. William L. Saunders was a UNC alumnus and a member of the Ku Klux Klan. Many of my peers think it is insensitive to students of color to name a building after a person with such a history. At the same time, Saunders is still part of our past and changing the name can be seen as trying to change history, which is impossible. When issues like this arise,

the university administration has the difficult job of balancing diverse, and sometime opposing, perspectives. It is difficult to handle issues fairly in an unfair world.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct. Executed
this 23 day of June, 2015.



Laura Ornelas